तव कथामृतं तप्तजीवनम्
tava kathāmṛtaṁ tapta-jīvanam

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Don't Hear Gita From the Rascals

His Divine Grace
A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada

Krishna himself is speaking in the *Bhagavad-gītā*. Don't misinterpret it. Simply hear it as Arjuna heard it. Sometimes rascals say, "Arjuna heard the *Bhagavad-gītā* directly, but we do not find Krishna now, so how can we hear it?" His words are there. Krishna is non-different from his words. He's absolute. If you read *Bhagavad-gītā* as it is, through disciplic succession, then you are as good as Arjuna, hearing directly from Krishna. There is no difference. But if you play around with the meaning, saying, "This word means this, this word means that," it is rascaldom.

As Arjuna said, *sarvam etad ṛtaṁ manye*, "My dear Krishna, whatever you are saying, that is correct. I totally accept it. I don't misinterpret it." [*Bg.* 10.14] *paraṁ brahma paraṁ dhāma pavitraṁ paramaṁ bhavān* — "You are the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the ultimate abode, the purest, the Absolute Truth." [*Bg.* 10.12] Krishna said he instructed *Bhagavad-gītā* to Arjuna because he was his devotee. Someone can understand *Bhagavad-gītā* as it is only by devotion. Krishna mentioned that this *Bhagavad-gītā*, this yoga system, had been lost, *yoga-naṣṭaḥ parantapa* [*Bg.* 4.2]. But, "Because you are my devotee I shall again begin teaching that yoga through you." Krishna did not go to find a so-called vedantist to teach it.

A real vedantist means someone who is a devotee. "*Veda*" means knowledge, and "*anta*" means ultimate. So what is the ultimate knowledge? In *Bhagavad-gītā* (7.19) it is described: *bahūnāṁ janmanām ante jñānavān māṁ prapadyate* — real knowledge means that after speculating life after life one finally comes to the point of surrendering unto Krishna. Unless you come to the point of surrendering unto Krishna, your knowledge is defective. You may advertise yourself as a very learned scholar, but we have got a simple formula. Our position is strong and simple. We accept the words of Krishna.

Now, when we see that someone is not a devotee of Krishna, or he does not surrender to Krishna, immediately we consider him to belong to one of the four classes, either *duṣkṛtināḥ*, the miscreants; *mūḍhāḥ*, the foolish; *narādhamāḥ*, the lowest of mankind; or *māyayā-apahṛta-jñānāḥ*, those whose knowledge has been stolen by illusion. Immediately. It doesn't require much time to test him, to see what he is, because he has no surrender to Krishna and he talks all nonsense. There are so many *Gītā* commentators in our country. They are simply talking nonsense, explaining *Bhagavad-gītā* minus Krishna. That's all. Such rascals have spoiled the whole country.

Politicians and everyone else, they are all saying, "Oh, we are students of the *Bhagavad-gītā*."

next column ☞

"And what do you know about Krishna?"

"Krishna is zero."

Krishna describes such persons, *na māṁ duṣkṛtino mūḍhāḥ prapadyante narādhamāḥ* — Those miscreants who are grossly foolish, who are lowest among mankind, whose knowledge is stolen by illusion, and who partake of the atheistic nature of demons, do not surrender unto me [*Bg.* 7.15]. So we have to hear. If we actually want to diminish our *anarthas*, then we must hear Krishna as he's speaking, without any interpretation.

This is the process of diminishing all dirty things within the heart. *śṛṇvatāṁ sva-kathāḥ kṛṣṇaḥ puṇya-śravaṇa-kīrtanaḥ hṛdy antaḥ-sthaḥ* — Sri Krishna, the Personality of Godhead, who is the *Paramātmā* [Supersoul] in everyone's heart and the benefactor of the truthful devotee, cleanses desire for material enjoyment from the heart of the devotee who has developed the urge to hear his messages, which are in themselves virtuous when properly heard and chanted [*Bhāg.* 1.2.17]. Krishna is *hṛdy antaḥ-sthaḥ*, within your heart. *Vidhunoti*, he washes away all dirty things therein. Krishna is taking charge of washing your dirty things. Why don't you take this opportunity and hear from him? What is this nonsense? Krishna simply says, "You hear about me; you hear from me." *satataṁ kīrtayanto mām* — "Always chanting about me, and hearing about me." [*Bg.* 9.14]. It is a simple process. But the rascals will not take to it. They say, "This is the meaning, that is the meaning." Humbug! Jugglery of words! Therefore they do not advance. *andhā yathāndhair upanīyamānāḥ*, the blind leading the blind [*Bhāg.* 7.5.31].

The story of the anchor is an example. Some persons were going on a boat, but the anchor was not taken out, so although they rowed the whole night, they just remained in the same place where they were.

One should hear about Krishna from Krishna or Krishna's representative, not from bogus men. According to this Vedic philosophy, if someone speaks about *Bhagavad-gītā*, but he's not a *vaiṣṇava*, one should not hear from him. Sanatan Goswami has forbidden that. "Don't hear from him. If you hear from him you will also become a rascal." Chaitanya Mahaprabhu has said, *māyāvādi-bhāṣya śunile haya sarva-nāśa* — "If one hears the commentary of *māyāvādis*, everything is spoiled" [*Cc. madhya* 6.169]. If you hear about Krishna from an impersonalist, a *māyāvādī*, then your future is doomed, finished. Therefore Sanatan Goswami has quoted from *Padma Purāṇa*:

avaiṣṇava-mukhodgīrṇaṁ pūtaṁ hari-kathāmṛtam
śravaṇaṁ naiva kartavyaṁ sarpocchiṣṭaṁ yathā payaḥ

One should not hear anything about Krishna from someone who is not a *vaiṣṇava*. Milk touched by the lips of a serpent has poisonous effects. Similarly, talks about Krishna given by a non-devotee are also poisonous. [quoted in *Cc. antya* 1.211]

There are some professional reciters who are not following the principles of *vaiṣṇava* behavior. To hear from them is forbidden.

— Lecture in Vrindavan. 29 October 1972.

DEVOTEES ARE NOT BOUND

BY FAMILY LIFE

Srila Visvanath Chakravarti Thakur's Commentary on* Bhāg. *10.14.36

tāvad rāgādayaḥ stenās tāvat kārā-gṛhaṁ gṛham
tāvan moho 'ṅghri-nigaḍo yāvat kṛṣṇa na te janāḥ

[Lord Brahma prays:] My dear Lord Krishna, until people become your devotees, their material attachments and desires remain thieves, their homes remain prisons, and their affectionate feelings for their family members remain foot shackles.

COMMENTARY*:* Here, Krishna may protest: "The *sannyāsīs* will object that the inhabitants of Vraja, who are all householders, have fallen into a network of material life, bound by attachment to wife, children, and a host of other persons and things."

[In order to clarify this possible objection from Krishna, Brahma speaks this verse, and the commentator elaborates Brahma's reply as follows:] "Yes. That is true for most materialistic *gṛhasthas.* However, what to speak of the householders of Vraja, even your ordinary devotees in other places are superior to these *sannyāsī* critics. Attachment, hatred and other material emotions are thieves because they steal the treasure of pure bliss from the soul. The rebellious souls are bound by their karma, placed in the prison cell of household life, and tied with foot shackles to a host of illusions.

"O Krishna, as long as people do not get the mercy of your devotees and become your followers, they remain in this position.

However, when they become your devotees they develop attachment for bhakti and aversion to things obstructing bhakti, and then they repose all their love in you. In this way, the thieves of material attraction, hatred and love become sanctified by becoming fixed in you, and then help the devotee by giving him spiritual bliss, knowledge and a host of advantages.

"Thus, the same home that was formerly a prison cell created by favorable and unfavorable *karmic* reactions, becomes for your devotee a place filled with service to you through the hearing and chanting of your glories and the performing of a host of other activities meant to please you. These activities carry one to your eternal abode. In this way, when a devotee awakens his affection for you, the bewilderment caused by objects such as his wife and sons becomes a cause for expressing his love for you. How can householders like this be compared to ordinary *sannyāsis?*

"My son Sanat-kumar criticizes the non-devotee *sannyāsīs* and praises the superiority of the devotee householders in *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* (4.22.40):

kṛcchro mahān iha bhavārṇavam āplaveśāṁ
ṣaḍ-varga-nakram asukhena titīrṣanti

The ocean of nescience is very difficult to cross because it is infested with many dangerous sharks in the form of the six senses.

"The residents of Vraja have thousands of times more love for you than householders who live in other places. Although you are the complete spiritual whole, you show yourself as dependent upon these loving devotees by taking the form of their son, friend or lover to become their submissive servant." ✿

— Viswanath Chakravarti Thakur. *Sārārtha-darśīni*. English translation by Sripad Bhanu Swami. Edited and published by Sripad Mahanidhi Swami. Vrindavan. 2004.

The Holy Name is Everything Part Two

Sri Srimad Gour Govinda Swami Maharaja

This lecture is continued from KK Bindu, *issue number one.*

A *vaiṣṇava* chants only one name. He has only one dharma, which is *hari-nāma*. *nāme prasphuṭita haya rūpa, guṇa, karma.* If you chant the holy name without offense — in other words, the pure name — then the all-beautiful form of Krishna, the transcendental pastimes of Krishna, and the attributes of Krishna — everything — will be manifested to you. The name is everything. The name is everything.

In text 26 of his *Padyāvalī,* Srila Rupa Goswami quotes the *prabhāsa-khaṇḍa* of *Skanda Purāṇa*:

madhura-madhuram etan maṅgalaṁ maṅgalānāṁ
sakala-nigama-vallī-sat-phalaṁ cit-svarūpam
sakṛd api parigītaṁ śraddhayā helayā vā
bhṛgu-vara nara-mātraṁ tārayet kṛṣṇa-nāma

Krishna's name is the sweetest of sweet things, the most auspicious of all auspicious things, the transcendental fruit of the vine of all Vedic literature. O best of the Bhrigus, chanted even once, either with faith or contempt, it delivers the chanter.

In text 23 of his *Padyāvalī,* Rupa Goswami writes:

brahmāṇḍānāṁ koṭi-saṅkhyādhikānām
aiśvaryaṁ yac cetanā vā yad-aṁśaḥ
āvirbhūtaṁ tan-mahaḥ kṛṣṇa-nāma
tan me sādhyān sādhanaṁ jīvanaṁ ca

If the opulence or knowledge of many millions of universes were clustered together, they would hardly equal a small fragment of the glory of Krishna's holy name. Krishna's holy name is my life. It is the goal of my life. It is the means I will employ to attain the goal of my life.

Whatever opulence or consciousness you may obtain in crores of universes, nothing can be compared with *kṛṣṇa-nāma*. *Kṛṣṇa-nāma* is our *sādhya* and *sādhana,* our goal and the means to attain that goal. Our only life is *kṛṣṇa-nāma.* Especially in this Kali-yuga, one should take complete shelter of this holy name. In *Bhagavad-gītā* (18.66), Krishna gave his last instruction, *sarva-dharmān parityajya mām ekaṁ śaraṇaṁ vraja* — "Just surrender unto me and abandon all other religion." In *Kali-yuga,* one should completely surrender oneself unto the holy name of Krishna. That Krishna came as Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu and taught us how to surrender unto the holy name of Krishna. Mahaprabhu has ordered in *Caitanya-bhāgavata* (*madhya* 23.76-78):

hare kṛṣṇa hare kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa hare hare
hare rāma hare rāma rāma rāma hare hare

prabhu bole,— "kahilāṁ ei mahā-mantra
ihā japa' giyā sabe kariyā nirbandha

☞ ☞

iha haite sarva-siddhi ha-ibe sabāra
sarva-kṣaṇa bala' ithe vidhi nāhi āra"

"I am giving you this *mahā-mantra*: *hare kṛṣṇa hare kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa hare hare hare rāma hare rāma rāma rāma hare hare*. Chant this with sincere enthusiasm. By chanting this mantra you will receive all perfection. So chant incessantly, for there are no rules or regulations for chanting the *mahā-mantra*."

Mahaprabhu said this is the *mahā-mantra*, this is our *japa-mantra*. One should only chant this mantra, no other mantra. Chant this mantra constantly. Don't miss one moment. The moment that you miss chanting the holy name, not remembering Krishna, is the most dangerous moment in your life. There is no *vidhi*, no regulation in this chanting. Mahaprabhu has taught in the second verse of his *Śikṣāṣṭaka:*

nāmnām akāri bahudhā nija-sarva-śaktis
tatrārpitā niyamitaḥ smaraṇe na kālaḥ
etādṛśī tava kṛpā bhagavan mamāpi
durdaivam īdṛśam ihājani nānurāgaḥ

"O my Lord, your holy name alone can render all benediction to living beings, and thus you have hundreds and millions of names, like Krishna and Govinda. In these transcendental names you have invested all your transcendental energies. There are no hard and fast rules for chanting these names."

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This is Mahaprabhu's order, Mahaprabhu's instruction: "In any way you can, chant! There are no hard and fast rules for this chanting."

Mahaprabhu has instructed in *Caitanya-bhāgavata* (*madhya* 28.26-28):

bala kṛṣṇa bhaja kṛṣṇa gāo kṛṣṇa-nāma
kṛṣṇa vinu keha kichu nā bhāviha āna
jadi āmā'-prati sneha thāke sabākāra
tabe kṛṣṇa-vyatirikta nā gāibe āra
ki śayane, ki bhojane, kiba jāgarane
ahar-niśa cinta kṛṣṇa, balaha vadane

Talk only of Krishna. Worship only Krishna. Sing Krishna's name. Think of Krishna and think of nothing else. If you love me, then please don't sing anything other than about Krishna. Whether asleep, awake, or eating your meals, day and night, think of and talk about Lord Krishna.

Speak of Krishna, do *bhajan* of Krishna, and chant the name of Krishna. Don't think of anything other than Krishna. Krishna says the same thing in *Bhagavad-gītā* 18.65, *man-manā bhava mad-bhakto* — "Think of me. Put me in your mind. Always, at every moment, attach your mind to me. Mahaprabhu says, "If you really love me, then don't chant any other name, only chant the name of Krishna. If you really love me, then every moment, when you are asleep, when you are awake, while you are accepting food, always, at every moment, 24 hours a day, chant the name of Krishna and only remember Krishna, nothing else.

Krishna has also said this in *Bhagavad-gītā* 8.14:

ananya-cetāḥ satataṁ yo māṁ smarati nityaśaḥ
tasyāhaṁ sulabhaḥ pārtha nitya-yuktasya yoginaḥ

For one who is always attached to me, who never forgets me for even for a moment, it's very easy on his part to obtain me. How can you always remember Krishna? Only by incessantly chanting this holy name of Krishna, without deviation. If you chant this holy name of Krishna then Krishna says it is very easy to get him.

Why are you forgetting Krishna! Don't you love Sriman Mahaprabhu? Mahaprabhu says, "If you really love me, then chant Krishna's name incessantly. Put firm unflinching faith in it. This is *śraddhā*, strong faith. One who has developed unflinching faith in this holy name is eligible to be initiated.

— From a lecture in Perth, Australia, 23 November 1990.